



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Conservation Art, Writing Contest Winners Announced *Students to be recognized on 'Biodiversity Day'*

Frankfort, Ky. (Feb. 13, 2012) – Six students from across Kentucky are being recognized in Frankfort on Feb. 16 for their art and writing skills.

The Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts, in partnership with the Kentucky Farm Bureau, each year sponsors the Jim Claypool Art Contest for grades 1-5, and the Conservation Writing Contest for grades 6-12, to educate students on soil, water, forestry and wildlife conservation. This year's theme, "Where Kentucky's Wild Things Are," focused on wildlife conservation.

Energy and Environment Cabinet Secretary Len Peters says getting children involved in conservation efforts helps ensure that those efforts will continue. "It's important that we inspire future environmental stewards through public and classroom activities that teach them about the conservation concepts and cultivate a respect for the natural world that will remain with them throughout their lives."

"Approximately 60,000 entries made up this year's contest, which means about 8,000 more students participated than last year," said Division of Conservation Director Steve Coleman. "This yearly competition allows students to learn the importance of conservation, to use their creativity to persuade the reader or the viewer to take action toward good wildlife conservation methods, and to practice their art and writing skills."

Students across the state used the wildlife conservation theme to create 42,924 art entries and 17,189 writing entries. The entries were submitted to local conservation districts that chose a county winner. From the county winners, state winners were selected in both categories by judges from a variety of environmental agencies and individual backgrounds.

The winners of the 2011 art contest are:

- State winner – Luke Watkins, Oldham County
- Runner-up – Jake Hicks, Marshall County
- Third place – Peyton Riley Duncan, Johnson County

The winners of the 2011 writing contest are:

- State winner – Nikita Perumal, Jefferson County
- Runner-up – Kelsey Cole, Magoffin County
- Third place – Shyra Oakes, Estill County

The students will be honored at 1 p.m., Feb. 16, 2012, in room 113 of the Capitol Annex as part of the Kentucky Conservation Committee's second annual "Biodiversity of Kentucky" multimedia educational event, which runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Legislators and the public are invited to attend the multi-agency event to learn more about Kentucky's rich, natural heritage, its value to Kentucky's economy, job creation, tourism and long-term sustainability. Key experts in biology, botany, ecology, forestry, conservation, land stewardship and other relevant disciplines will be on hand to discuss Kentucky's outstanding biodiversity.

Gov. Steve Beshear has proclaimed Thursday as Biodiversity Day in the Commonwealth, encouraging Kentuckians to learn more about the variety of Kentucky's biological heritage and life, its remarkable ecology and its unique offerings.

For questions about the day's events, call Art Williams, executive director of the Kentucky Conservation Committee at 502-689-4403, or visit the committee's website at <http://kyconservation.org>.

The following students were chosen as area-level winners:

Area-level Art Winners

Area 1 Winner: Gina Caturano, McCracken County
Area 2 Winner: Lilly Hyde, Todd County
Area 3 Winner: Halee Jo Deckard, Monroe County
Area 4 Winner: William Tyler Moehrke, Spencer County
Area 5 Winner: Grace Adams, Henry County
Area 6 Winner: Savannah Thompson, Anderson County
Area 7 Winner: Jayden Fisher, Bell County
Area 8 Winner: Caroline Whitt, Bath County
Area 9 Winner: Abby Little, Letcher County

Area-level Writing Winners

Area 1 Winner: Nathan Rister, Calloway County
Area 2 Winner: Madisan Vandiver, Hopkins County
Area 3 Winner: Tora Norman, Barren County
Area 4 Winner: Kate Cobb, Marion County
Area 5 Winner: Shelby Rodgers, Henry County
Area 6 Winner: Shannon Murray, Mercer County
Area 7 Winner: Madison Miller, Rockcastle County
Area 8 Winner: Travis McCoy, Montgomery County
Area 9 Winner: Ryan Caudell, Owsley County

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